RECOLLECTIONS OF GREG

PERSONAL REMINISCENSES OF THE ENGLISH HISTORIAN.

Captain Gordon McCabe Recalls His Meetings With Mr. Greg—His Peculiarities. Ardent Devotion to the South.

In response to many requests made through the public prints and by private letter, we are allowed to print the following excerpts from Captain Gordon McCabe's "Personal Recollections of Percy Greg," which he recently read before the "Literary Club," of this city. The paper was not designed for publication, but Captain McCabe has kindly consented that we should publish the greater portion of it, as the public interest in Mr. Greg and his history seems to be as keen as ever.

After his ordium, Captain McCabe continues: "I first met Mr. Greg in 1873, when he visited America and brought to me a letter of introduction.

I remember that I first saw him for a few hours in the Brevoort House, in New York. Soon after he paid me a visit at my house in Petersburg, and I constantly met him thereafter when I went to England on my vacation trips abroad.

Most Englishmen, whom I have met, are not very conversant with American affairs, but I cannot say in fairness that, according to my experience, their ignorance is greater in this regard than is our own touching English matters, though I am aware the contrary opinion is held by Americans.

So it was that when I first met this tall, loose-made Englishman, grave to austerity in mien and bearing, with sad and rather lack-lustre eyes, and was informed by him that he had come to America to look personally into the condition of the Southern States, I naturally expected a repetition of some of the preposterous questions which I had so often endeavored to answer with becoming gravity.

I had not only become accustomed to being addressed and regarded in England as "a South American," but I recalled that an intelligent Englishman, an intense "Southern sympathizer," had once said to me in London in '66, when the war was fresh in the minds of all the world: "Aw, I beg pardon, but I believe you gentlemen, who served in the Confederate army, are on half pay, now, are you not?" I promptly informed him that I was on even less than that.

So it was that, when Mr. Percy Greg's card was sent up to me at the Brevoort House with his letter, I tried to fortify my soul with patience for what I felt sure was coming, and descended to meet my usual fate.

But, when after a few words of civil greeting on both sides, he plunged into the middle of affairs, I recognized within a few minutes that I was talking to a man from whom I might learn much, and to whom I could tell little touching affairs in the South, outside my native State. He at once accepted my invitation to visit me under my modest roof here in Virginia, and many of you here, old friends, who know how naturally shy and silent I am, will be surprised to learn that during that visit we talked incessantly all day and far into the night.

His grasp of the deplorable condition of affairs in the Southern States as they existed then, his exact knowledge of all the facts, political and material, his familiarity with the burning questions that had steadily widened the rift between the two sections, under pressure of passion and interest, and had finally rent the country asunder—his vehement denunciations of the hypocrisy of the North, his no less vehement convictions as to the righteousness of our contention—his simple, unconscious eloquence when he spoke of Lee, whom he termed "the last representative of Christian chivalry"—all this made his talk a rare delight to one who believed as fully as I did, and do, that "eternal Right can never be made Wrong," irrespective of defeat or victory.

Before he came to me he had gone to Lexington to stand beside the tombs of Lee and Jackson. There he had been the guest of General Custis Lee, who had given him one of the pens used by his father. There was no lack-lustre in Greg's eye, as he held it lovingly in his hand and said to me: "There is not money enough in the Bank of England to buy this pen from me, poor as I am." His memory was prodigious—his facts were at his finger ends, and having a well-trained mind, he marshaled them with easy logical precision, and carried his listener with him almost from the start by his splendid powers of speech and by the absolute sincerity of his convictions.

It has been my fortune to know a good many famous men, but I have never known but two his peers as brilliant talkers. One has recently passed away; the other is Algeron Swinburne.

He was a moody man, and would sit for hours smoking silently, only from time to time, at rare interval, asking a question or offering an observation.

Yet he was thoroughly urbane, as a rule, and in his own home the most cordial and gracious and simple of hosts. Only last night in searching for some of his letters, which I am sorry to say I have mislaid, I came across his letter inviting me to visit him at "Dorset Hall," in Surrey. The cordial ring in it brought him back yet more vividly to me.

Thither I went some year in "the seventies."

It was a pretty unpretending old place, notwitstanding its high-sounding name, embowered in climbing ivy, with small Elizabethian windows and quaint gables, situated in fine grounds.

I met hearty welcome, I need not say, for the English are at once the coldest race on earth to strangers, and the most hospitable to friends.

He and his family made me feel at home at once, and the climax was reached when, as we were about to go into dinner, about 8 o'clock, his little son was brought in in his night-gown to kiss me goodnight.

"Dorset Hall" is only twenty miles from London, and thither he went nearly every day for his work.

I saw much of him in "town," too, where he frequently entertained me at his club, the "Junior Carlton," in Pall Mall.

But towards the last his life was greatly saddened by personal bereavements, and his own continued ill-health.

One of his sons, a bright and promising boy, who had come home for his vacation from Germany, where he had been at school, fell from a tree in the grounds of "Dorset Hall," and was instantly killed. Another was in danger of becoming totally blind. There were other misfortunes, which I may not mention even after all these years.

In the last years he suffered greatly, as I have said, and, finally, on Christmas eve, 1889, he passed away.

A word as to his family.

He was descended from Nonconformist mill-owners or cotton-spinners, as they are called in England. His grandfather, Samuel Greg, owned the great mills at Quarry Bank, near Wimslow, Cheshire, and must have been a man of strong sense and great force of character, if one may judge him by his sons.

Percy Greg's father, William Rathbone Greg, was originally a mill-owner, but his literary tastes and speculative studies little adapted him for success in trade.

His numerous books, especially his "Creed of Christendom" and "Enigmas of Life," which, with one or two voumes of essays, were republished in this country, are, doubtless, familiar to many of you.

He was a constant contributor to the great English "Quarterlies," and was for years a recognized force in the development of English Radicalism.

His brother, Percy Greg's uncle, Robert Hyde Greg, also a cotton-spinner, but a most successful one, was an economist of high repute, was elected, despite his refusal to stand, member of Parliament for Manchester by the Liberals, and was widely known as a trenchant pamphleteer, who did yeoman's service in the cause of Parliamentary Reform, and the Repeal of the Corn Laws.

Another brother, Samuel Greg, also a cotton-spinner, was an ardent philanthropist, and the author of various religious books, one of which, published after his death, contains a prefatory notice of him by his close friend, Dean Stanley, who had a cordial appreciation of Mr. Greg's labors in behalf of ameliorating the condition of the mill operatives and the working classes generally.

All three of these brothers were graduates of the University of Edinburgh.

But though Percy Greg came naturally by his love of letters, never was there stronger antagonism between father and son than that which existed between him and his distinguished father in all matters of political and religious belief.

The father was a Radical in politics; the son a Tory as vehement and violent as any country squire of the "October Club." In religion the father was an urbane secularist—the son a spiritualist.

It is true that in early life Percy Greg rejected all forms of belief, rather inclining, so far as I can judge, to materialism, but finally he found his rest in the doctrine of spiritualism.

His career was that of a journalist during the best part of his life.

He was first employed as a leader-writer on the Manchester Guardian, one of the most powerful papers in the Kingdom, and afterwards went up to London, where he joined the regular staff of the Standard and Saturday Review. Later on he and the Saturday Review people quarrelled and separated; why I never knew. As both the Standard and Saturday Review were staunch supporters of the Confederate cause, it was, doubtless, his work for their columns which led him eventually to undertake his history, and to tell the story of our great conflict from the Southern point of view. I have in my library a complete set of the Saturday Review from its commencement in 1856 to the present time, and while its brilliant and caustic criticisms of men, of public measures and of books has caused it to be known among reading folk in England as "The Reviler," I must confess that the volumes covering the period from 1861 to 1865 are to this day very pleasant reading to a Southern man whose heart was in the Confederate cause.

Mr. Greg also contributed articles of great brilliancy and vigor to the leading reviews, and his article (in 1887, I think) in the Quarterly, defending Lord Salisbury, who was a personal as well as a political friend, carried that special number of the review rapidly through four editions. But, besides being a professional journalist, Mr. Greg was author of a very considerable number of books. These he sent me from time to time, but they were all (but one) unfortunately burned in a fire which destroyed many valuable volumes in my library a year ago.

In nearly every one of them his devotion to the South and admiration of the old Southern civilization are the chief note.

As the books, I do not doubt, may still be had in England, I give the titles from my library catalogue for the benefit of those who are admirers of his work.

They are:

The Devil's Advocate, a series of essays, political and religious (1878).

Without God; Negative Science and Negative Ethics.

Across the Zodiac, a novel displaying extraordinary imagination and scientific ingenuity. It describes life in the planet Mars, and some of the scenes are worthy the pen of the author of Vathek (1880).

Then came the novels Errant (1880), Ivy, Cousin and Bride (1881), Sanguelac (1883), in all of which his enthusiastic admiration of Southern chivalry finds vent, and finally one with the strangely ominous title, The Verge of Night (1885).

Percy Greg always struck me as a disappointed man in so far as what he most cared for in life was concerned. His ability was almost universally recognized, but his vehement fearlessness and aggressiveness naturally provoked harsh criticism in return and his books never obtained more than a succes d'estime.

It is not easy for us here to estimate the power to make or mar the fortunes of a book that a reviewer on the staff of the great literary journals like the Saturday, or the Spectator or the Athenaeum, holds in his hands. And this power is often, nay, very generally used to the uttermost, for "the jealousies of Grub street" are as bitter and as virulent in the reign of Victoria, as they ever were in the days of "good Queen Anne." His History of the United States, which you are to discuss here to-night, if I ever give you a chance, appeared in 1887 and fell still born, and until very recently the two handsome volumes could be purchased for a mere song. I am not here to express any opinion of the book, but I may be allowed to say that the reason for the public indifference to it is not far to seek.

The war in America has long since ceased to interest the majority of Englishmen. Besides, the Liberal reviewers sneered at it as "a huge political pamphlet," because of its pronounced hostility to the United States, with which country all Englishmen now desire to be at peace. Then another set—inheritors of the most extreme views of what was once known as "the Exeter Hall apostles"—absolutely refused to believe Mr. Greg's account of the humaner aspect of slavery as it existed in many of the States.

It would, indeed, have been a proud day for Percy Greg, could he have lived to see the interest and admiration that have been excited by his history within the past year in the capital of that Confederacy, which he so passionately loved. Mr. Greg, in the versatility of his genius, was also a poet of no mean sweep. His early poems were published under the nom de plume of Lionel Holdreth, and in 1875 appeared his "Interleaves," which he was specially anxious to find a circulation in the South, as he stated to me in a letter, which accompanied the volume sent to me in that year.

With your permission, and with many apologies for these hastily written reminiscences, which I hurriedly threw together last night in the pauses of that most delightful occupation known to my craft as "correcting exercises," I will close this paper by reading from this last volume ("Interleaves") his poem, commemorating the surrender at Appomattox Courthouse, entitled "The Ninth of April, 1865." This stirring poem we have already published.

INAUGURATION BALLS.

EVENTS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN WASHINGTON.

Inaugural Ceremonies—Arrangements Nearly Completed—The Balls Since Washington's Day.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Feb. 18.—The ceremonies attending the inauguration of a President are very simple. They are rendered impressive by the inherent nature of the act which they surround, and by the vast numbers who look on. Unless all signs fail the throng this year will be greater than it ever was before. To one having a general view of the newspapers of the country, it would seem as if every organization, not distinctly Republican in its character, had decided to be present. The question one hears most frequently in Washington now is: "Where are you going to stand along the avenue and take off your hat when Cleveland goes by?"

All preparations have been made. There are details to be worked out, but they have

COLONEL JAMES G. BERRET.

to do only with the formation and handling of the great parade and similar matters. The arrangements this year do not differ in any notable manner from those of previous inaugurations, with a single exception, and this has to do with the ball. The Inaugural Ball is really, in a way, the most brilliant portion of the day's observances. One gets a better idea of the great throng in the city and of the remarkable assemblage of notable personages, by attending the ball than in any other way. The novel feature about this year is not due to the design of man, but to the fact that March 4th falls upon Saturday. It would be wicked to dance in a Government building on Sunday morning, and, therefore, the ball must be over by 12 o'clock. Hence it is easy to perceive that it must start much earlier than the experience of mankind would lead one to suppose that such an affair could be got under way.

Mr. Edwin H. Hay says that the ball will start at 8 o'clock, and as he is chairman of the sub-committee, this statement carries weight. The preparations for the interesting festivities are on a grand scale. Eight thousand dollars will be spent on the decorations, and the enormous hall of the Pension building will doubtless present a gay

"The first inaugural ball which I attended," said Colonel Berret, "was that given in honor of William Henry Harrison. The city had only 23,000 inhabitants then, and, of course, such an attendance as we new expect was a thing unheard of for such an affair. There were, perhaps, 700 people present at the ball, which was held, if my memory serves me, in Carusi's saloon. According to the etiquette of the time, the President was escorted by a Senator chosen by the committee, and generally its chairman, and by the Mayor. He entered without great formality and was escorted to the platform, where the people were introduced to him. I recall no special incident of this ball. It was an agreeable affair, and there was a great wine supper. No lady came with Harrison.

"In Polk's time, four years later, there was a curious state of affairs. A division of sentiment had shown itself, resulting in two parties—as to the matter of the ball—called the citizens and the Democrats. Tickets to the Harrison ball had cost $10. The Democrats now proposed to reduce the price to $5, and to make other changes in the arrangement. The result was that two balls were held—one at $10 and one at $5. The Democratic, or $5 ball, was held in the National Theatre, on the same site as the present structure of that name. The $10 ball was held at Carusi's. Mr. and Mrs. Polk appeared at both balls, and were received with every evidence of enthusiastic regard. I was chosen, with Mayor Seton, to escort President and Mrs. Polk to the dais, in Carusi's, and there the people were introduced to them. The next morning the National Theatre burned to the ground. A difference in a few hours might well have made this incident a catastrophe.

"In Taylor's time, 1849, there was the same difficulty as had resulted in the double entertainment for his predecessor. There was not only a social division, but politics came in. There was a real attempt to make the ball a test and a means of political influence. Two balls were held. The pronounced Whig ball was held in a building constructed for the purpose, adjoining City Hall. The other was at Jackson Hall, over the old Globe printing office. Both balls were fairly successful, but the effort to make political capital out of them was a failure so far as I could observe.

"No ball was given to President Pierce in 1853. He had lost a son in a railroad accident near his home just before he came to Washington. The victim of this sad mishap was his only child, a most promising boy, whose loss was a sore grief to his father. In such circumstances any entertainment like a ball was felt to be wholly inappropriate. The ball given to Buchanan in '57 was a very handsome affair. It was held in such a building as the Whigs had put up in Taylor's time. The rooms in City Hall were used for supper rooms, coat rooms, etc. With Buchanan came Miss Harriet Lane, his niece, whom I remember as a most accomplished and beautiful woman, distinguished by her grace of bearing in the performance of any social duty,

and glittering appearance. It is a fine thing to have the interior of this building once in four years atone for the unspeakable ugliness of its exterior every day in the year. There will be 100 musicians in the main orchestra and sixty in the promenade orchestra. The engraved programmes have been prepared with great care. The floor manager will have sixteen aids, to each of whom will be assigned a section of the hall. They will be in communication with their chief by means of an electric wire. Every one of them will press his button when the sets in his part of the hall are filled, and when all have signaled the floor manager will start the music. There will be such an enormous crush that dancing will be almost as vigorous an exercise as playing foot-ball, but everybody will have a good time.

The Inaugural ball has a very interesting history. No man knows it better than Colonel James G. Berret. He has attended every ball since '41, when William Henry Harrison was entertained with the spectacle of dancing and merrymaking in his honor. Everybody knows Colonel Berret. A tall and portly man he is, to whom high office has been the garment of dignity, while nature bestows upon him the better gift of kindliness. He has been Mayor of the city, and a member of the Maryland Legislature. His connection with that body has probably never been duplicated by any public man. In 1837 he was chosen to the Legislature, and he served his term. Fifty-five years later he was again chosen from the same county. He was the youngest of the lawmakers when the State called him first; he was the oldest when she again summoned him to her legislative halls.

"The building and the general arrangements were the same when Lincoln was entertained in 1861. I was Mayor, and, according to the custom, received the President in my office previous to his entering into the ball. He came under the escort of Senator Anthony, of Rhode Island. Mrs. Lincoln was with Stephen A. Douglas. A little after 10 o'clock Lincoln, with Senator Anthony and myself, passed into the hall followed by Mr. Douglas and Mrs. Lincoln, and made our way to the dais. It was a handsome ball, and, for the time, a great success. Lincoln seemed to enjoy the company. He remained until 12 o'clock, when he expressed to me his desire to withdraw if could do so without interfering in any way with the festivities. We went back to the City Hall. Then I went with the President to the White House. It was a most beautiful night. The moon shone with wonderful brilliancy, and as we came upon the avenue the great white dome of the Capitol shone out like silver. Such a night and such a scene assist the memory, and I treasure now my pleasant recollections of the man and the hour. I remember him, too, at the Inaugural Ball of 1865, which was held in the Patent Office, but there is no special incident connected with that occasion.

"The first ball given to Grant was in the Treasury Building. The crowd was enormous, the confusion indescribable. The vast building was packed. Cut up as it is into innumerable rooms, it is little adapted for such a purpose. There were supper rooms everywhere. It was like an infinity of private entertainments under one roof, and in some respects it was very enjoyable. All these balls, indeed, have been outbursts of genuine hospitality on the part of the people of Washington, and the reality of the sentiment has assured the heartiness of the enjoyment. But on this occasion there was a most surprising climax. The arrangements for checking hats and coats were, to say the least, far from perfect. The consequence was that few men got their own hats, while many got none at all. It was the same with the overcoats and with the wraps of the ladies. All Washington was a great misfit establishment, and the newspapers for days afterward were full of the advertisements of people who vainly sought their missing apparel.

"The Inaugural Ball of Grant's second term was even more remarkable. We constructed a building in Judiciary square on a very extensive scale and handsome in its internal arrangements. It was intended to accommodate 10,000 to 12,000 people, and I do not think the estimates of the attendance were wrong so far as the possibilities of human foresight extended. But nature had made some plans for that day without giving any notice to the committee in charge of the Inaugural Ball.

Such a day I had never seen in Washington before, nor have I seen the like of it since. It was cold to a degree which beggars exaggeration. A wind was abroad which found out and froze the marrow of one's bones. We made every effort to warm the building in which the ball was held, but it was impossible to warm anything in Washington that day. I have been told that the coffee prepared for the guests froze in their cups. It was my agreeable duty to escort Mrs. Grant to the dais. It was out of the question for her to lay aside her wraps, and I dared not dispense with my overcoat. Dressed as for an Arctic expedition we advanced through the hall, and Mrs. Grant took her place beside the President. Women danced that night in sealskin cloaks, and army officers concealed the splendor of their uniforms under the warmest article of apparel that they could find in their wardrobes. Naturally, the attendance was very small, compared to what it would have been and there was considerable financial loss. Part of it was made up by several concerts which were held in the building. It was an excellent building, by the way, and was planned and executed by Mr. A. B. Mullett. A word about General Grant's demeanor. He bore himself very well on such occasions. Somewhat reserved he was, it is true, but surely not lacking in courtesy. And there was a quiet dignity about him which could not fail to impress every thoughtful beholder.

"No ball was given to President Hayes. The uncertainty of the situation previous to his inauguration made adequate preparation impossible. In President Garfield's time a new method of conducting the finances of the ball was introduced A guarantee fund was tried, and the people subscribed liberally, enabling the committee to get the building now known as the Museum—then partially completed—in which to hold the ball. Under the supervision of John W. Thompson, it proved a great success and paid all its expenses.

"The ball given to Mr. Cleveland eight years ago was held just where the one for which we are now preparing will be given, but the building was incomplete. The walls were just up. There was no water, no heat, no light, no windows. At great expense the building was put in condition; and as handsome a ball was given as had ever been seen in this city. It paid its expenses, and some hundreds were left over for charity. I escorted Mr. Cleveland to the platform, and Mr. William M. Galt, chairman of the executive committee, escorted Miss Rosa Elizabeth Cleveland. Both seemed to take great interest in the festivities.

"Four years later, when Mr. Harrison was the guest of honor, the Pension building was fully completed. Under the management of Colonel A. T. Britton, the most brilliant, and in every way successful ball that I have ever seen was given. The building was beautifully decorated, and there was, of course, a far greater opportunity for elaborate effects than on the previous occasions, when so much of the building was of a merely temporary character.

"The fund advanced was returned to the subscribers, and a surplus of $26,000 remained and was dedicated to charity. It was placed in charge of the commissions of the district, and the interest is applied to the purchase of fuel for the poor, perhaps"—and Colonel Berret smiled pleasantly in concluding his sketch—"in memory of the Arctic Ball of 1872."

The solemn observance of the day will not vary in their general character from the custom that has long prevailed. Shortly before noon Mr. Cleveland will go to the White House, where President Harrison will receive him. The President's private carriage will be waiting at the door, and it will convey the outgoing and the incoming President to the Capitol, where, on the platform before the eastern front, the oath of office will be administered by the Chief Justice, and the inaugural address will be delivered. No voice that ever was propelled by human lung could reach the end of the vast crowd that will be there assembled; but, though few can hear, every one will have the satisfaction of knowing that the great vow has been taken in his presence, and the words of the address sent toward him on the air.

There will be the usual reception, and then, in lighter vein again, will follow such entertainment as fireworks can give and the illumination of the Capitol by enormous artificial suns.

Great things are expected of the parade which the President reviews after he has returned from the Capitol. A stand is erected for that purpose before the White House.

SCENE AT THE INAUGURAL BALL OF 1885.

CLEVELAND DELIVERING THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS IN 1885.

THE EAST FRONT OF THE CAPITOL—INAUGURATION DAY, 1889.

MISFITS IN WASHINGTON, MARCH 5, 1869.

THE JUG, THE EEL AND THE BASS,

An Incident That Shows the Sagacity of Certain Variety of Game Fish.

Frank Baird, of the internal revenue office, is just now telling of a strange thing that he witnessed down on classic Ten Mile Creek during an extremely hot day last season. He and ex-Collector George L. Johnson were out for a day's sport with hook and line when this happened, and, of course, no one who knows the gentlemen will doubt their veracity, or their ability to catch more fish than anybody else on the creek. On this occasion they had been favored with fair luck, and it was with much internal satisfaction that they sat down on the bank to eat their noon lunch. What they saw there is best told in the words of Mr. Baird himself:

"We had with us a small demijohn of lemonade," said he, "and this we placed in the water a few feet from shore to keep it cool. About fifteen minutes after we left it I was startled by an exclamation from Johnson, who had his eye on the jug, and when I looked I was as much surprised as he to see a big black bass tugging away at the corn cob stopper of the jug. The mouth of the demijohn was even with the surface of the water, so that the fish could just reach it. He was pulling for dear life, but did not seem to make much headway until a big eel came along and took a hand in the game. The eel was about four feet long, and he swam leisurely around for a few minutes, as though he were trying to make out what the bass was up to. All this time we kept as still as mice, and in breathless astonishment awaited further developments. Soon the eel seemed to comprehend the situation, and he volunteered his help.

"He was long and lithe, and, raising his body out of the water about a foot, he twisted himself into a corkscrew, and soon had the stopper out of the jug. He then slipped down, and politely gave the bass a chance for the first drink. The fish made a desperate effort to get something out of the jug, but signally failed, and was obliged to give up, evidently much disgusted. The eel then took his turn, and found it an easy matter to reach up out of the water, stick his head in the jug, and imbibe the contents. This he did, with joyous satisfaction showing plainly all over his body. But the poor bass was disconsolate, and became more uneasy every minute, while the eel stayed manfully at the jug.

"Finally a bright idea struck Mr. Bass, and quick as a flash he grabbed Mr. Eel by the tail, and with one snap bit off the end. Then he kept the new end of the eel in his mouth and sucked that jug dry through the eel's body. When the jug was emptied they both swam away, and by their actions they must have been in a very hilarious condition. We were out a quart of first-class 'bait,' but we were glad to pay that much for the exhibition we had witnessed. The incident also shows the ingeniousness, as well as ungrateful qualities, of the black bass."—Toledo Commercial.

THE GHOST IN LOWER 11.

A Commercial Traveler's Strange Experience in a Sleeping Car.

"I once occupied a sleeping car berth that was haunted. It was lower 11. I rode in it from Chicago to Detroit, and I'll tell you I spent a horrible night. The weather was pretty cold, and, as I am subject to neuralgia, I tucked the blanket in close around my neck to avoid the draught, and I was just dozing off when I heard a most unearthly laugh and the blanket was suddenly pulled away from my chin and half off my chest. It was only 10 o'clock, but nearly everybody was in bed, and when I peeped out to see if anybody was playing a joke on me not a soul was in sight.

"I tucked the blanket around my neck again, without really thinking much about the disturbance, and was soon in another doze, when off went the blanket once more, and again I heard the shrieking laugh. I hastily readjusted the blanket and tried to attribute the matter to my own nervousness, but the blanket was yanked away at once to the hyena-like laugh accompaniment. I looked out into the aisle again, but nobody was there. I looked towards the foot of the bed, and it seemed to me that blue flames were dancing there. My flesh began to creep. I could hear my heart pumping like a Corliss engine. As my fear grew I saw a white figure stretched at full length through the section panel work, its feet toward or against mine. The blue flames seemed to play all over it and to leap from the eyes and mouth of the figure when the demon laugh was uttered. The tugging at the blanket continued. I trembled and poured perspiration. I could not rise. I rolled out of the berth into the aisle, and maybe I didn't hunt up the porter of that car. I told him the story.

"'Gracious! gracious!' he exclaimed, his eyes bulging. 'Ize got dat hoodoo blanket. Dat's a blanket, boss, what was in a berf whar a man died wid de jimjams. No, he didn't die in dat berf—but dat wuz his blanket, an' when it comes out o' the laundry some one's boun' to git it, and Ize done gone an' got it dis trip. Nobody w'at gits it ever gits de bes' o' dat ghost, an' I guess I bettah give you anoder blankit ur you won't sleep to-night.'

"I got another blanket and slept all right. The porter told me there was always complaint from the passenger who got the haunted blanket. This occurred a year ago, and I suppose the blanket is on the road yet.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.